

THE HUMAN HEART—Pride

“Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.” (16:18)

INTRODUCTION—*“There is one vice of which no man in the world is free; which everyone in the world loathes when he sees it in someone else; and of which hardly any people, except Christians, ever imagine that they are guilty themselves. I have heard people admit that they are bad-tempered, or that they cannot keep their head about girls or drink, or even that they are cowards. I do not think I have ever heard anyone who is not a Christian accuse himself of this vice. And at the same time I have very seldom met anyone, who was not a Christian, who showed the slightest mercy to it in others. There is no fault which makes a man more unpopular, and no fault which we are more unconscious of in ourselves. And the more we have it in ourselves, the more we dislike it in others.*

“The vice I am talking about is Pride or Self-Conceit; and the virtue opposite to it, in Christian morals, is called Humility... it was through Pride that the devil became the devil: Pride leads to every other vice: it is the complete anti-God state of mind.” (C.S.Lewis, Mere Christianity, pp.197-198).

I. COMPANIONS OF PRIDE

- A. Haughtiness (18:12; 21:4; 16:18). Haughtiness is being disdainfully or contemptuously proud. Why does pride show such contempt for others?
- B. Scoffing (21:24). Why does he scoff? It is his way of letting you know **his** superiority and **your** inferiority.
- C. Boasting (27:2; 20:6; 17:19). Pride’s greatest fear is that someone else will not notice the greatness it sees in itself. Therefore, it boasts of itself (cf. 25:14).

II. PRIDE VS. GOD

- A. Pride is the Ultimate Sin Against God (3:5-7). It is the assumption that man is self-sufficient and important enough to compete with God’s greatness, magnitude, strength and wisdom.
- B. Pride Opposes the First Principle of Wisdom (8:13; 15:33; 22:4). That principle is the “*fear of the Lord*.” How does it oppose this principle?
- C. Pride is an Abomination to God (16:5; 6:16-19). It claims honor for itself, but only God can bestow honor and He does so in response to man’s humility rather than his pride (29:23; 15:33).

III. CONSEQUENCES OF PRIDE

- A. Shame (11:2; 25:27). It is ironic that pride seeks glory for itself, yet receives shame.
- B. Contention (13:10; 28:25). What kinds of relationships experience conflict, strife, and contention because of pride?
- C. Destruction (15:25; 16:18-19; 18:12). God brings the man who challenges Him to ruin. He has no need to even compete with man for glory.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS—

- 1) Are **you** looking to identify pride in yourself or in others?
- 2) Why is it so difficult to see pride in ourselves but so easy to detect it in others?

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- 3) *Why do God and pride not mix? What is it that causes the enmity between the two? How did Satan's pride cause the enmity between himself and God (1 Timothy 3:6)?*
 - 4) *What is the beginning of wisdom (9:10)? What does the proud man lack (8:13; 22:4)? Therefore what is he?*
 - 5) *Why can't pride admit that it is wrong?*
 - 6) *In what way is pride competitive?*
 - 7) *Does pride receive more pleasure from having what it wants or from having more than the next person?*
 - 8) *From what one thing—more than anything else—does pride receive the most enjoyment?*
 - 9) *Why can two proud people never resolve their differences or work together?*
 - 10) *Why does the proud man 'scoff' at others (21:24)?*
 - 11) *Many vices will sometimes bring people together—you may find fellowship, joking, and friends among drunkards or unchaste people. Does pride ever bring people together?*
 - 12) *Is there any positive kind of pride that we should have?*
 - 13) *Someone has said, 'Humility is an elusive quality, because once you think you finally got it, you just lost it.' Why is that true?*

Related Passages—12:9; 14:3; 25:6-7; 26:12